

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 DODE-00
H-01 NSC-05 EB-08 OMB-01 /082 W
-----088484 030043Z /63

R 021348Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3653
INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 02244

BRUSSELS FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, EEC, NATO, NL, SP
SUBJECT: VISIT TO SPAIN OF DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER

1. THE VISIT TO MADRID FEBRUARY 26-28 OF DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER KLAAUW COMPLETED THE CYCLE OF SUCH VISITS BY EC FOREIGN MINISTERS, AND TURNED OUT TO HAVE BEEN AN AGREEABLE FINALE AS FAR AS THE SPANISH WERE CONCERNED. THE VISITOR WAS SUPPORTIVE OF SPANISH ENTRY INTO THE EC, A POINT ON WHICH SPANISH PRESS ATTENTION FOCUSED, AND EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING REGARDING SPAIN'S CURRENT POSITION ON NATO.

2. ON THE EC, IN FACT, VAN DER KLAAUW WAS CATEGORIC: "THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT, TO THE EXTENT OF ITS POSSIBILITIES," HE DECLARED AT THE LUNCHEON HOSTED BY SPANISH FONMIN OREJA, "WILL WORK ACTIVELY AND POSITIVELY FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS TO BEGIN WITHOUT DELAY AND PROGRESS WITHOUT HINDRANCE. WE ARE SURE THAT THE PROBLEMS PRESENTED BY SPAIN'S ADHESION CAN FIND SOLUTION."

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3. REGARDING NATO, VAN DE KLAAUW TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE HE AGREED WITH OREJA ON THE NECESSITY FOR A CONSENSUS TO BE DEVELOPED IN SPAIN BEFORE INITIATING CONTACTS FOR SPANISH INTEGRATION. IN THE PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS, WE WERE TOLD BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CHIEF FOR WESTERN EUROPE (DEL PINO), VAN DER KLAAUW ALSO MADE CLEAR THAT

THE NETHERLANDS WOULD WELCOME SPANISH ENTRY INTO NATO.

4. COMMENT: THE NETHERLANDS HAS HAD A REPUTATION HERE AS THE COUNTRY MOST OPPOSED TO FRANCO SPAIN AND LEAST WILLING TO CREDIT SPAIN'S CREDENTIALS AS A DEMOCRACY MEETING THE POLITICAL CRITERIA FOR ENTRY INTO THE EC AND NATO. THE GOS HAS BEEN MINDFUL -- AND SOMETIMES SOMEWHAT RESENTFUL -- OF THIS, AND ACCORDING TO A KEY FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL, SUAREZ VISITED THE NETHERLANDS FIRST IN HIS SWING LAST YEAR AROUND THE EC CIRCUIT, ON THE GROUNDS IT WOULD BE THE TOUGHEST. ON THE BASIS OF COMMENTS MADE TO US BY DEL PINO, IT SEEMS CLEAR THE GOS ATTRIBUTES THE EVIDENT SHIFT IN DUTCH ATTITUDE AT LEAST IN PART TO THE RECENT CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT THERE. STABLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MADRID02244
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780096-0727
Format: TEL
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803115/aaaadtrl.tel
Line Count: 76
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: bddd3dba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3142751
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT TO SPAIN OF DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER
TAGS: PEPR, NL, SP, EEC, NATO, (VAN DER KLAUW, CHRISTOPHER A)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/bddd3dba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014